

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election, without airing a pro-Kerry documentary is a clear example of electioneering and of the dangers of media consolidation. This is the second such example of Sinclair Broadcasting's abuse of the privileges (see the preempting of a Nightline airing earlier this year on the grounds that listing the names of the soldiers who died in Iraq would be sensational and politically motivated) granted it by the people of the United States and the FCC.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard.

Thank you.